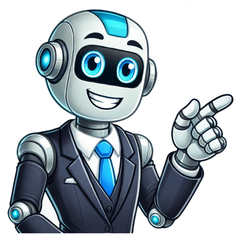
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[1470–80; < Latin rhētoric(us) (< Greek rhētorikós) + -al1] Random House Kernerman Webster's College Dictionary, © 2010 K Dictionaries Ltd. Copyright 2005, 1997, 1991 by Random House, Inc. All rights reserved. Adj.1.rhetorical - of or relating to rhetoric; "accepted two or three verbal and rhetorical changes I suggested"- W.A.White; "the rhetorical sin of the meaningless variation"- Lewis Mumford2.rhetorical - given to rhetoric, emphasizing style at the expense of thought; "mere rhetorical frippery"figurative, nonliteral - (used of the meanings of words or text) not literal; using figures of speech; "figurative language"fancy - not plain; decorative or ornamented; "fancy handwriting"; "fancy clothes"unrhetorical - not rhetoricalBased on WordNet 3.0, Farlex clipart collection. © 2003-2012 Princeton University, Farlex Inc.adjective2. high-flown, flamboyant, windy, flashy, pompous, pretentious, flowery, showy, florid, bombastic, hyperbolic, verbose, oratorical, grandiloquent, high-sounding, declamatory, arty-farty (informal), silver-tongued, magniloquent He disgorges a stream of rhetorical flourishes.Collins Thesaurus of the English Language – Complete and Unabridged 2nd Edition. 2002 © HarperCollins Publishers 1995, 2002adjective2. Characterized by language that is elevated and sometimes pompous in style:aureate, bombastic, declamatory, flowery, fustian, grandiloquent, high-flown, high-sounding, magniloquent, orotund, overblown, sonorous, swollen. The American Heritage® Roget's Thesaurus. Copyright © 2013, 2014 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. All rights reserved. [rɪˈtɒrɪkəl] ADJ → retóricorhetorical question → pregunta f retóricaCollins Spanish Dictionary - Complete and Unabridged 8th Edition 2005 © William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd. 1971, 1988 © HarperCollins Publishers 1992, 1993, 1996, 1997, 2000, 2003, 2005 [rɪˈtɒrɪkəl] adj → rhétoriqueCollins English/French Electronic Resource. © HarperCollins Publishers 2005 adj → rhetorisch; (pej) → phrasenhaft, schwülstig (pej)Collins German Dictionary – Complete and Unabridged 7th Edition 2005. © William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd. 1980 © HarperCollins Publishers 1991, 1997, 1999, 2004, 2005, 2007 [rɪˈtɒrɪk/əl] adj (style, question) → retorico/aCollins Italian Dictionary 1st Edition © HarperCollins Publishers 1995 Want to thank TFD for its existence? Tell a friend about us, add a link to this page, or visit the webmaster's page for free fun content. Link to this page: If I am rhetorical it is because Stroeve was rhetorical.He leaned back cautiously, for the chair on which he sat had a ricketty leg, and it was disconcerting when a rhetorical flourish was interrupted by a sudden fall to the floor.That sense of a life in natural objects, which in most poetry is but a rhetorical artifice, was, then, in Wordsworth the assertion of what was for him almost literal fact.It was always a very rhetorical and often a trying affair, but in these progressive times you have to make a noise to get a living.Indeed, though Indians are generally very lofty, rhetorical, and figurative in their language at all great talks, and high ceremonials, yet, if trappers and traders may be believed, they are the most unsavory vagabonds in their ordinary colloquies; they make no hesitation to call a spade a spade; and when they once undertake to call hard names, the famous pot and kettle, of vituperating memory, are not to be compared with them for scurrility of epithet.He paused awhile, and then went on with one of those strange bursts of rhetorical eloquence that Zulus sometimes indulge in, which to my mind, full though they are of vain repetitions, show that the race is by no means devoid of poetic instinct and of intellectual power.She delivered herself of an harangue in which she asked a great many rhetorical questions and answered them with a little bang of one fist upon another.But if "Roman history is nine-tenths lying," we can hardly expect a smaller proportion of that rhetorical figure in the annals of a people capable of so incredible cruelty to a lovely women; for a hard heart has a false tongue.A representative sentence is this: 'Although there be none so ignorant that doth not know, neither any so impudent that will not confesse, friendship to be the jewell of humaine joye; yet whosoever shall see this amitie grounded upon a little affection, will soone conjecture that it shall be dissolved upon a light occasion.' Others of Lyly's affectations are rhetorical questions, hosts of allusions to classical history, and literature, and an unfailing succession of similes from all the recondite knowledge that he can command, especially from the fantastic collection of fables which, coming down through the Middle Ages from the Roman writer Pliny, went at that time by the name of natural history and which we have already encountered in the medieval Bestiaries.If these words had been spoken by some easy, self-indulgent exhorter, from whose mouth they might have come merely as pious and rhetorical flourish, proper to be used to people in distress, perhaps they might not have had much effect; but coming from one who daily and calmly risked fine and imprisonment for the cause of God and man, they had a weight that could not but be felt, and both the poor, desolate fugitives found calmness and strength breathing into them from it.And the third of these speech-improving Bells, the inventor of the telephone, inherited the peculiar genius of his fathers, both inventive and rhetorical, to such a degree that as a boy he had constructed an artificial skull, from gutta-percha and India rubber, which, when enlivened by a blast of air from a hand-bellows, would actually pronounce several words in an almost human manner.All the chief actors being of a worldly importance, the barristers were well balanced; the prosecutor for the Crown was Sir Walter Cowdray, a heavy, but weighty advocate of the sort that knows how to seem English and trustworthy, and how to be rhetorical with reluctance. Literature Literary Terms rhetoric, the principles of training communicators—those seeking to persuade or inform. In the 20th century it underwent a shift of emphasis from the speaker or writer to the auditor or reader. This article deals with rhetoric in both its traditional and its modern forms. For information on applications of rhetoric, see the articles broadcasting, communication, and propaganda. The traditional rhetoric is limited to the insights and terms developed by rhetors, or rhetoricians, in the Classical period of ancient Greece, about the 5th century bc, to teach the art of public speaking to their fellow citizens in the Greek republics and, later, to the children of the wealthy under the Roman Empire. Public performance was regarded as the highest reach of education proper, and rhetoric was at the center of the educational process in western Europe for some 2,000 years. Institutio oratoria (before ad 96; “The Training of an Orator”), by the Roman rhetorician Quintilian, perhaps the most influential textbook on education ever written, was in fact a book about rhetoric. Inevitably, there were minor shifts of emphasis in so long a tradition, and for a long time even letter writing fell within the purview of rhetoric; but it has consistently maintained its emphasis upon creation, upon instructing those wishing to initiate communication with other people. Modern rhetoric has shifted its focus to the auditor or reader. Literary criticism always borrowed from rhetoric—stylistic terms such as antithesis and metaphor were invented by Classical rhetoricians. When language became a subject of sustained scholarly concern, it was inevitable that scholars would turn back to Classical theories of rhetoric for help. But modern rhetoric is far more than a collection of terms. The perspective from which it views a text is different from that of other disciplines. History, philosophy, literary criticism, and the social sciences are apt to view a text as though it were a kind of map of the author’s mind on a particular subject. Rhetoricians, accustomed by their traditional discipline to look at communication from the communicator’s point of view, regard the text as the embodiment of an intention, not as a map. They know that that intention in its formulation is affected by its audience. They know also that the structure of a piece of discourse is a result of its intention. A concern for audience, for intention, and for structure is, then, the mark of modern rhetoric. It is as involved with the process of interpretation, or analysis, as it is with the process of creation, or genesis. Rhetorical analysis is actually an analogue of traditional rhetorical genesis: both view a message through the situation of the auditor or reader as well as the situation of the speaker or writer. Both view the message as compounded of elements of time and place, motivation and response. An emphasis on the context automatically makes a rhetorician of the literary critic or interpreter and distinguishes that approach from the other kinds of verbal analysis. Critics who have insisted upon isolating, or abstracting, the literary text from the mind of its creator and from the milieu of its creation have found themselves unable to abstract it from the situation of its reader. Certain modern critics have joined with rhetoricians in denouncing the folly of all such attempts at abstraction. In interpreting any text—say a speech by Elizabeth I of England at Tilbury, Essex, or a play by the great Hindu poet of the 5th century, Kālidāsa—the rhetorician must imaginatively re-create the original situation of that text as well as endeavor to understand those factors that condition a present understanding. All discourse now falls within the rhetorician’s purview. Modern rhetoricians identify rhetoric more with critical perspective than with artistic product. They justify expanding their concerns into other literary provinces on the basis of a change in thinking about the nature of human reason. Modern philosophers of the Existentialist and Phenomenologist schools have strongly challenged the assumptions whereby such dualities as knowledge and opinion, persuasion and conviction, reason and emotion, rhetoric and poetry, and even rhetoric and philosophy have in the past been distinguished. The old line between the demonstrable and the probable has become blurred. According to these modern philosophers, a person’s basic method of judgment is argumentation, whether in dialogue with others or with a text, and the results are necessarily relative and temporal. Such modern philosophers use legal battles in a courtroom as basic models of the process every person goes through in acquiring knowledge or opinion. For some, philosophy and rhetoric have become conflated, with rhetoric itself being a further conflation of the subject matter Aristotle discusses not only in his Rhetoric but also in his Topics, which he had designed for dialectics, for disputation among experts. According to this view, philosophers engage in a rhetorical transaction that seeks to persuade through a dialogic process first themselves and then, by means of their utterances, others. It is in this “argumentative” light that a rhetorically trained reader or auditor interprets all texts and justifies their inclusion within the province of rhetoric. Rhetoric has come to be understood less as a body of theory or as certain types of artificial techniques and more as an integral component of all human discourse. As a body of discursive theory, rhetoric has traditionally offered rules that are merely articulations of contemporary attitudes toward certain kinds of prose and has tended to be identified with orations in which the specific intent to persuade is most obvious. But modern rhetoric is limited neither to the offering of rules nor to studying topical and transient products of controversy. Rather, having linked its traditional focus upon creation with a focus upon interpretation, modern rhetoric offers a perspective for discovering the suffusion of text and content inhering within any discourse. And for its twin tasks, analysis and genesis, it offers a methodology as well: the uncovering of those strategies whereby the interest, values, or emotions of an audience are engaged by any speaker or writer through his discourse. The perspective has been denoted with the term situation; the methodology, after the manner of certain modern philosophers, may be denoted by the term argumentation. It should be noted at the outset that one may study not only the intent, audience, and structure of a discursive act but also the shaping effects of the medium itself on both the communicator and the communicant. Those rhetorical instruments that potentially work upon an audience in a certain way, it must be assumed, produce somewhat analogous effects within the writer or speaker as well, directing and shaping his discourse. For the tasks imposed by the rhetorical approach some of the most important tools inherited from antiquity are the figures of speech: for example, the metaphor, or comparison between two ostensibly dissimilar phenomena, as in the famous comparison by the 17th-century English poet John Donne of his soul and his mistress’s to the legs on a geometer’s compass in his “A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning”; another is the allegory, the extended metaphor, as in John Bunyan’s classic of English prose Pilgrim’s Progress (1678, 1684), wherein man’s method of earning Christian salvation is compared to a road on which he journeys, and the comparison is maintained to such an extent that it becomes the central structural principle of the entire work. Such figures may be said to pertain either to the texture of the discourse, the local color or details, or to the structure, the shape of the total argument. Ancient rhetoricians made a functional distinction between trope (like metaphor, a textural effect) and scheme (like allegory, a structural principle). To the former category belong such figures as metaphor, simile (a comparison announced by “like” or “as”), personification (attributing human qualities to a nonhuman being or object), irony (a discrepancy between a speaker’s literal statement and his attitude or intent), hyperbole (overstatement or exaggeration) or understatement, and metonymy (substituting one word for another which it suggests or to which it is in some way related—as part to whole, sometimes known as synecdoche). To the latter category belonged such figures as allegory, parallelism (constructing sentences or phrases that resemble one another syntactically), antithesis (combining opposites into one statement—“To be or not to be, that is the question”), congeries (an accumulation of statements or phrases that say essentially the same thing), apostrophe (a turning from one’s immediate audience to address another, who may be present only in the imagination), enthymeme (a loosely syllogistic form of reasoning in which the speaker assumes that any missing premises will be supplied by the audience), interrogatio (the “rhetorical” question, which is posed for argumentative effect and requires no answer), and gradatio (a progressive advance from one statement to another until a climax is achieved). However, a certain slippage in the categories trope and scheme became inevitable, not simply because rhetoricians were inconsistent in their use of terms but because well-constructed discourse reflects a fusion of structure and texture. One is virtually indistinguishable from the other. Donne’s compass comparison, for example, creates a texture that is not isolable from other effects in the poem; rather, it is consonant with a structural principle that makes the comparison both appropriate and coherent. Above all, a modern rhetorician would insist that the figures, like all elements of rhetoric, reflect and determine not only the conceptualizing processes of the speaker’s mind but also an audience’s potential response. For all these reasons figures of speech are crucial means of examining the transactional nature of discourse. In making a rhetorical approach to various discursive acts, one may speak of the rhetoric of a discourse—say, Robert Browning’s poem “My Last Duchess” (1842)—and mean by that the strategies whereby the poet communicated with his contemporaries, in this case the Victorians, or with modern man, his present readers; or one may speak of the rhetoric in a discourse and mean by that the strategies whereby the persona, the Duke of Ferrara who speaks Browning’s poem in dramatic-monologue fashion, communicates with his audience in the poem, in this case an emissary from the father of Ferrara’s next duchess. The two kinds of rhetoric are not necessarily discrete: in oratory or in lyric poetry, for example, the creator and his persona are assumed to be identical. To a degree Aristotle’s distinction between the three voices of discourse still holds. A poet, according to Aristotle, speaks in his own voice in lyric poetry, in his own voice and through the voices of his characters in epic (or narrative), and only through the voices of his characters in drama. Thus, the speaker of oratory or of most nonfictional prose is similar to the lyric speaker, with less freedom than the latter either to universalize or to create imaginatively his own audience. Rhetorical strategies are the best communication tools that help you persuade, engage, and connect with your audience more effectively. Writers, speakers, marketers, and students can use these techniques to make their messages more memorable and impactful. From alliteration and metaphors to hyperbole and chiasmus, these strategies work in speeches, essays, advertisements, and everyday conversations. In this post, I’ll explore 15 rhetorical strategies that can transform your message from ordinary to compelling, ensuring your words leave a lasting impact. Rhetorical strategies are strategic techniques I have used to persuade and engage an audience effectively. You can incorporate these strategies through speeches, essays, debates, advertisements, and everyday conversations. When used skillfully, rhetorical strategies have the power to evoke emotions, influence opinions, and leave a lasting impact on listeners or readers. Rhetorical strategies have three fundamental pillars: Logos, Ethos, and Pathos. Logos is an appeal to logic and reason. It involves presenting factual information, logical arguments, and rational evidence to support a speaker’s or writer’s point of view. It will help you build credibility and convince the audience through solid evidence and sound reasoning. Ethos is an appeal to credibility and ethics. It establishes the speaker’s or writer’s credibility, authority, and trustworthiness. Showcasing expertise, qualifications, and moral values enhance the speaker’s or writer’s persuasive power. Pathos is an appeal to emotions. In this technique, you can use language, storytelling, and vivid imagery to evoke emotions and create a connection with the audience. It plays a crucial role in engaging the audience on an emotional level, fostering empathy, and influencing their perspectives. You can use rhetorical strategies to achieve different objectives in various contexts and situations. Here are some instances where employing rhetorical strategies can prove beneficial: Public Speaking: Whether delivering a keynote address, a persuasive presentation, or a motivational speech, utilizing rhetorical strategies can help speakers engage their audience, convey their message effectively, and inspire action. Writing: Rhetorical strategies are invaluable in writing across various genres. From essays and articles to novels and advertising copy, employing these strategies can enhance the impact of your writing and captivate readers. Debates and Discussions: When engaging in debates or discussions, using rhetorical strategies can help present arguments persuasively, counter opposing viewpoints effectively, and win over the audience. Marketing and Advertising: Rhetorical strategies are crucial in creating effective marketing and advertising campaigns. Marketers can influence consumer behavior and drive sales by appealing to emotions, emphasizing benefits, and using persuasive language. Everyday Conversations: Rhetorical strategies can also be employed in casual conversations to effectively make a point, connect with others, and influence opinions. Understanding when and how to use rhetorical strategies can empower you to become a more persuasive and influential communicator. Let’s now explore and examine 15 commonly used rhetorical strategies, along with unique examples showcasing their effectiveness in communication. Alliteration is a rhetorical device used to create a memorable and catchy phrase. It works by repeating the same sound at the beginning of two or more words in a sentence or phrase. You can use it in various forms of writing, including poetry, literature, and advertising slogans. Alliteration helps emphasize a particular point, create a rhythmic pattern, or draw attention to certain words or phrases. It helps you to create a rhythmic flow and draw attention to specific words or phrases. Examples: “Sally sells seashells by the seashore.” “The big brown bear bellowed in the woods.” Amplification involves expanding on a point or idea by providing additional details, examples, or explanations. Emphasizing the significance of a point and providing a deeper understanding of the topic helps to strengthen arguments and make them more convincing. Examples: “The impact of climate change is not limited to rising temperatures. It affects our ecosystems, wildlife habitats, and agricultural productivity. It poses a threat to our coastal communities and increases the frequency and intensity of natural disasters.” “The benefits of exercise go beyond physical health. Regular physical activity boosts mood, reduces stress, improves cognitive function, and enhances overall well-being.” Anaphora is the recurrence of a phrase or word at the beginning of sentences that are successive (or clauses). It creates a rhythmic and emphatic effect, emphasizing key ideas and evoking emotions. This technique helps you create an impact on the listener or reader, so they can understand the central message. Examples: “We will fight for justice. We will fight for equality. We will fight for a better future.” “He was tall, he was dark, he was handsome.” Antanagoge helps you with balancing a negative point with a positive one to provide perspective and lessen the impact of the negative. This technique helps you to reframe a negative situation by highlighting the positive aspects and encouraging a more balanced perspective. Through this, you can counterbalance negativity and maintain optimism. Examples: “Yes, the task may be challenging, but the reward is worth the effort.” “Although the project faced setbacks, it provided valuable learning experiences and paved the way for future success.” Through Antiphrasis, you can use words with meanings opposite to their literal sense for ironic or humorous effect. This rhetorical device adds wit and irony to communication, creating a contrasting effect that captures attention and generates a memorable impression. Examples: “Isn’t it a lovely day?” (when it’s raining heavily) “He’s a real genius!” (referring to someone who consistently makes foolish mistakes) Aporia allows you to express doubt or uncertainty to raise questions and stimulate critical thinking. It prompts reflection and encourages individuals to think deeply about a subject. This technique fosters critical thinking and opens the door to new ideas and possibilities. Examples: “I’m not sure if we can solve this problem, but what if we approach it from a different perspective?” “I find myself questioning the conventional wisdom. Are we truly making progress, or are we merely spinning our wheels?” Cacophony is the use of harsh or discordant sounds to create an unsettling or jarring effect. It evokes strong emotions and creates a vivid sensory experience, leaving a lasting impact on the audience. You can use this technique to show urgency or create intensity. Examples: “The screeching tires, honking horns, and blaring sirens filled the air, creating a cacophony of chaos.” “The crashing waves and thunderous applause of the crowd merged into a symphony of sound.” Chiasmus involves reversing the order of a word or a phrase to create parallelism and contrast. This adds symmetry and balance to your language, making it more memorable and thought-provoking. Examples: “You can take the woman out of the city, but you can’t take the city out of the woman.” “Love makes time pass; time makes love pass.” Epiphora, aka epistrophe, is the recurrence of a word or a phrase towards the end of successive sentences or a sentence. This rhetorical device creates a rhythmic and emphatic effect, reinforcing key ideas and leaving a lasting impression on the audience. Examples: “Friends are everything, Friends are family, Friends are honest” “We must fight for justice, we must fight for equality, we must fight for a better future.” Euphemism involves using mild or indirect language to replace harsh or unpleasant words or phrases. This technique is used for more tactful and sensitive communication, particularly on delicate or sensitive topics. It softens the impact of potentially harsh or offensive language. Examples: “He passed away.” (instead of “he died”) “She’s under the weather.” (instead of “She is sick”) Hypophora involves asking a question and immediately providing an answer to create emphasis and engage the audience. It encourages active participation from the audience and reinforces key points by posing and answering relevant questions. Examples: “Why is education important? Because it equips us with the knowledge and skills we need to succeed in life.” “What can we do to protect the environment? We can reduce our carbon footprint, recycle, and support sustainable initiatives.” Hyperbole involves exaggerating for emphasis or dramatic effect. It creates a vivid and attention-grabbing effect, leaving a strong impression on the audience. Its technique immediately grabs the attention of the audience with the author’s witty sense of humor. Examples: “I’ve told you a million times to clean your room!” “I’m so hungry, I could eat a horse!” Metaphor involves comparing two unrelated things to highlight similarities and create a deeper understanding. It provides a fresh perspective and engages the audience’s imagination. They make communication more captivating and memorable by creating vivid imagery. Examples: “Her smile is a ray of sunshine.” “Life is a journey filled with ups and downs.” A simile involves comparing two things using “like” or “as” to illustrate a point or create imagery. They add color and vividness to language, helping the audience visualize and connect with the message. Examples: “He fought like a lion.” “Her voice was as sweet as honey.” Zeugma is a rhetorical device where a word is used to govern or modify a couple or more words (or phrases) in a sentence, but the word is used differently concerning each of the words it modifies. In other words, it is a way of using a word in a sentence where it is grammatically correct with two or more words, but the word has a different meaning or context with each of those words. Examples: “She broke his car and his heart.” “He lost his job and his dignity.” Identifying rhetorical devices requires careful observation and an understanding of their characteristics. Here are some tips to help you smartly identify rhetorical devices: Listen for patterns: Pay attention to recurring words, phrases, or structures that create emphasis or rhythm. Analyze the use of language: Look for language that aims to evoke specific emotions or create a connection with the audience. Notice contrasts: Identify instances where contrasting ideas or words are used to create a dramatic effect or highlight a point. Observe the overall structure: Analyze the organization and flow of a piece of communication, identifying patterns and structures that enhance the message. Consider the impact: Reflect on how the communication makes you feel and the lasting impression it leaves on you. This can help identify the presence of rhetorical devices. Related Reads: Learning rhetorical strategies takes practice, but the results speak for themselves. Your writing and speaking become more engaging when you use techniques like anaphora, metaphors, and hyperbole strategically. These tools help you create emotional connections, build credibility, and make your points stick with readers and listeners. Start small by picking two or three strategies that feel natural to you. Experiment with them in your email, presentation, or social media post. Watch how your audience responds differently when you apply these communication techniques. View synonyms for rhetoricalused for, belonging to, or concerned with mere style or effect, rather than truth, substance, or meaning.Her bold and ingenious analogies, although engaging, are purely rhetorical, adding nothing to our understanding of the issue.Synonyms: oratorical, stylistic, verbalmarked by or tending to use exaggerated language or bombast.Fortunately, the rebel leaders did not have the military power to follow through on their fiery rhetorical eruptions.of, relating to, or concerned with rhetoric, or the skillful use of language to persuade people.She had spent hours with her advisors discussing rhetorical strategy, and now it was time to deliver the speech.of, relating to, or in reference to a rhetorical question.No need to respond—that was rhetorical.concerned with effect or style rather than content or meaning; bombasticof or relating to rhetoric or oratory”Collins English Dictionary — Complete & Unabridged” 2012 Digital Edition © William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd. 1979, 1986 © HarperCollins Publishers 1998, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012rhetorically adverbrhetoricalness nounnonrhetorical adjectiveunrhetorical adjectiveOrigin of rhetorical1First recorded in 1470–80; from Latin rhētoric(us) (from Greek rhētorikós) + -al 1Examples have not been reviewed.With these plans on the table, Mamdani’s victory provoked the city’s billionaire class and its water carriers to rhetorical paroxysms, including forecasts of economic armageddon for the city.Both courts rejected Eastman’s claims that such statements and rhetorical hyperbole are constitutionally protected.As the rhetorical skirmishes and pile-ons continued, it became clearer that the deep-seated differences among local, state and federal officials left few paths for a resolution.She commands the stage with rhetorical finesse, making it all the more disappointing that her character isn’t more complexly deployed by O’Hara.Congressional Republicans could find it harder to keep their members behind Trump's bill with Musk providing rhetorical – and, perhaps financial – air for those who break ranks.rhetoricrhetoricallyBrowse#aabbccddeeffgghhiijjkkllmmnnooppqqrrssttuuvvwwxxyyzzAboutCareersContact usCookies, terms, & privacyHelpFollow usGet the Word of the Day every day!© 2025 Dictionary.com, LLC When you hear the word “rhetoric,” what comes to mind? For many, it conjures images of flowery language or manipulative speech. But the true definition of rhetoric encompasses so much more. At its core, rhetoric is the art of effective communication and persuasion. It’s a skill that has shaped civilizations, sparked revolutions, and continues to influence our daily interactions. Let’s dive into the fascinating world of rhetoric and explore its rich history, diverse applications, and enduring relevance in today’s society. Whether you’re a student, professional, or simply someone interested in honing your communication skills, understanding the definition of rhetoric is key to becoming a more effective and persuasive communicator. What is the Simple Definition of Rhetoric? At its simplest, rhetoric can be defined as the art of effective communication and persuasion. It involves using language, both spoken and written, to inform, motivate, or persuade an audience. The Origins and Evolution of Rhetoric The study of rhetoric has ancient roots, dating back to classical Greece and Rome. In fact, the word “rhetoric” itself comes from the Greek “rhetorike,” which roughly translates to “the art of speech or of a speaker.” Early Greek philosophers like Aristotle, Plato, and Isocrates laid the groundwork for what would become a cornerstone of Western education for centuries to come. Aristotle, in particular, made significant contributions to the concept of rhetoric. He identified three key elements of persuasion: Ethos (credibility of the speaker) Pathos (emotional appeal) Logos (logical reasoning) These elements remain central to our understanding of effective communication today. As rhetoric evolved, it expanded beyond just public speaking to encompass written communication as well. During the Renaissance, rhetoric became a crucial part of humanist education, with scholars like Erasmus emphasizing its importance in both spoken and written forms. The Components of Rhetoric To truly grasp what rhetoric means, it’s essential to understand its key components. While there are many ways to break down the elements of rhetoric, one common approach is the “five canons of rhetoric,” first outlined by Cicero in ancient Rome: Invention: Developing and refining your argument Arrangement: Organizing your ideas effectively Style: Choosing appropriate language and tone Memory: Internalizing your message (particularly important for speeches) Delivery: Presenting your argument effectively These components work together to create persuasive and impactful communication. By mastering each element, you can significantly enhance your ability to convey ideas and influence others. Rhetoric in the Modern World While rhetoric has ancient origins, its applications in the modern world are vast and varied. From political speeches to advertising campaigns, rhetoric shapes our perceptions and decisions in countless ways. Politics and Public Discourse Perhaps nowhere is rhetoric more visible than in the realm of politics. Whether in debates or rallies, politicians throughout history have masterfully employed rhetoric, whether intentionally or otherwise. Politicians and public figures use rhetorical techniques to sway public opinion, rally support for their causes, and criticize opponents. The power of political rhetoric was famously demonstrated by leaders like Martin Luther King Jr., whose “I Have a Dream” speech remains a masterclass in persuasive communication. Law Rhetoric is also incredibly important in the world of law. Attorneys employ the elements of rhetoric to win over the judge or jury to their cause. Nowhere is there a more clear example of rhetoric being strategically employed to achieve an outcome the speaker desires. Often, trials can be a perfect example of an exciting rhetorical battle between two sides with opposing viewpoints. In the business world, understanding rhetoric is crucial for effective marketing. Advertisers use rhetorical devices to create compelling narratives around products and services, tapping into consumers’ emotions and desires. From catchy slogans to emotional storytelling, rhetoric is at the heart of all successful advertising campaigns. Education and Academia Rhetoric continues to play a vital role in education. Many universities offer courses in rhetoric and composition, recognizing its importance in developing critical thinking and communication skills. The Power and Pitfalls of Rhetoric While rhetoric can be a powerful tool for positive change, it’s important to recognize its potential for misuse. The phrase “empty rhetoric” often refers to language that sounds impressive but lacks substance or sincerity. This highlights the importance of ethical considerations in the use of rhetorical techniques. Effective communicators understand that true persuasion comes not just from clever wordplay, but from a combination of solid reasoning, emotional resonance, and credibility. As the Merriam-Webster dictionary notes, rhetoric can be defined as “the art of speaking or writing effectively.” The key word here is “effectively” – it’s not just about sounding good, but about achieving your communication goals in a meaningful way. Developing Your Rhetorical Skills Improving your understanding and application of rhetoric can significantly enhance your communication abilities. Here are some tips to help you develop your rhetorical skills: Study classical and contemporary examples of effective rhetoric Practice identifying rhetorical devices in everyday communication Work on developing clear, logical arguments Pay attention to your audience and tailor your message accordingly Seek feedback on your communication style and work to improve weak areas Remember, becoming a skilled rhetorician is a lifelong journey. Even the most accomplished speakers and writers continually work to refine their rhetorical abilities. Conclusion Understanding rhetoric is more than just an academic exercise – it’s a practical skill that can enhance every aspect of your personal and professional life. From crafting compelling presentations to navigating complex social interactions, the principles of rhetoric offer valuable tools for effective communication. As we’ve explored, the concept of rhetoric has evolved significantly since its ancient origins, but its core principles remain relevant in our digital age. Whether you’re a student, professional, or simply someone looking to communicate more effectively, developing your rhetorical skills can open up new opportunities and help you achieve your goals. So the next time you encounter the word “rhetoric,” remember that it represents a rich tradition of thought and practice that continues to shape our world. By honing your own rhetorical abilities, you can become a more persuasive, influential, and effective communicator in whatever field you choose to pursue. For the work by Aristotle, see Rhetoric (Aristotle). Rhetoric[note 1] is the art of persuasion. It is one of the three ancient arts of discourse (trivium) along with grammar and logic/dialectic. As an academic discipline within the humanities, rhetoric aims to study the techniques that speakers or writers use to inform, persuade, and motivate their audiences.[2] Rhetoric also provides heuristics for understanding, discovering, and developing arguments for particular situations. Painting depicting a lecture in a knight academy, painted by Pieter Isaacsz or Reinhold Timm for Rosenborg Castle as part of a series of seven paintings depicting the seven independent arts. This painting illustrates rhetoric. Jesus was a preacher in 1st-century Judea. Aristotle defined rhetoric as "the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion", and since mastery of the art was necessary for victory in a case at law, for passage of proposals in the assembly, or for fame as a speaker in civic ceremonies, he called it "a combination of the science of logic and of the ethical branch of politics".[3] Aristotle also identified three persuasive audience appeals: logos, pathos, and ethos. The five canons of rhetoric, or phases of developing a persuasive speech, were first codified in classical Rome: invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery. From Ancient Greece to the late 19th century, rhetoric played a central role in Western education and Islamic education in training orators, lawyers, counsellors, historians, statesmen, and poets.[4][note 2] Ezra calls for the rebuilding of the temple in this 1860 woodcut by Julius Schnorr von Karolsfeld. Scholars have debated the scope of rhetoric since ancient times. Although some have limited rhetoric to the specific realm of political discourse, to many modern scholars it encompasses every aspect of culture. Contemporary studies of rhetoric address a much more diverse range of domains than was the case in ancient times. While classical rhetoric trained speakers to be effective persuaders in public forums and in institutions such as courtrooms and assemblies, contemporary rhetoric investigates human discourse writ large. Rhetoricians have studied the discourses of a wide variety of domains, including the natural and social sciences, fine art, religion, journalism, digital media, fiction, history, cartography, and architecture, along with the more traditional domains of politics and the law.[6] Because the ancient Greeks valued public political participation, rhetoric emerged as an important curriculum for those desiring to influence politics. Rhetoric is still associated with its political origins. However, even the original instructors of Western speech—the Sophists—disputed this limited view of rhetoric. According to Sophists like Gorgias, a successful rhetorician could speak convincingly on a topic in any field, regardless of his experience in that field. This suggested rhetoric could be a means of communicating any expertise, not just politics. In his Encomium to Helen, Gorgias even applied rhetoric to fiction by seeking, for his amusement, to prove the blamelessness of the mythical Helen of Troy in starting the Trojan War.[7] Plato defined the scope of rhetoric by discarding any connotation of religious ritual or magical incantation, simply taking the term in its literal sense, which means "leading the soul" through words.[8] He criticized the Sophists for using rhetoric to deceive rather than to discover truth. In Gorgias, one of his Socratic Dialogues, Plato defines rhetoric as the persuasion of ignorant masses within the courts and assemblies.[9] Rhetoric, in Plato's opinion, is merely a form of flattery and functions similarly to culinary arts, which mask the undesirability of unhealthy food by making it taste good.[citation needed] Plato considered any speech of lengthy prose aimed at flattery as within the scope of rhetoric. Some scholars, however, contest the idea that Plato despised rhetoric and instead view his dialogues as a dramatization of complex rhetorical principles.[10] Socrates explained the relationship between rhetoric in flattery when he maintained that a rhetorician who teaches anyone how to persuade people in an assembly to do what he wants, without knowledge of what is just or unjust, engages in a kind of flattery (kolakeia) that constitutes an image (eidolon) of a part of the art of politics.[11] Aristotle both redeemed rhetoric from Plato and narrowed its focus by defining three genres of rhetoric—deliberative, forensic or judicial, and epideictic.[12] Yet, even as he provided order to existing rhetorical theories, Aristotle generalized the definition of rhetoric to be the ability to identify the appropriate means of persuasion in a given situation based upon the art of rhetoric (technê).[13] This made rhetoric applicable to all fields, not just politics. Aristotle viewed the enthymeme based upon logic (especially, based upon the syllogism) as the basis of rhetoric. Aristotle also outlined generic constraints that focused the rhetorical art squarely within the domain of public political practice. He restricted rhetoric to the domain of the contingent or probable: those matters that admit multiple legitimate opinions or arguments.[14] Since the time of Aristotle, logic has changed. For example, modal logic has undergone a major development that also modifies rhetoric.[15] The contemporary neo-Aristotelian and neo-Sophistic positions on rhetoric mirror the division between the Sophists and Aristotle. Neo-Aristotelians generally study rhetoric as political discourse, while the neo-Sophistic view contends that rhetoric cannot be so limited. Rhetorical scholar Michael Leff characterizes the conflict between these positions as viewing rhetoric as a "thing contained" versus a "container". The neo-Aristotelian view threatens the study of rhetoric by restraining it to such a limited field, ignoring many critical applications of rhetorical theory, criticism, and practice. Simultaneously, the neo-Sophists threaten to expand rhetoric beyond a point of coherent theoretical value. In more recent years, people studying rhetoric have tended to enlarge its object domain beyond speech. Kenneth Burke asserted humans use rhetoric to resolve conflicts by identifying shared characteristics and interests in symbols. People engage in identification, either to assign themselves or another to a group. This definition of rhetoric as identification broadens the scope from strategic and overt political persuasion to the more implicit tactics of identification found in an immense range of sources[specify].[16] Burke focused on the interplay of identification and division, maintaining that identification compensates for an original division by preventing a strict separation between objects, people, and spaces.[17] This is achieved by assigning to them common properties through linguistic symbols.[17] Among the many scholars who have since pursued Burke's line of thought, James Boyd White sees rhetoric as a broader domain of social experience in his notion of constitutive rhetoric. Influenced by theories of social construction, White argues that culture is "reconstituted" through language. Just as language influences people, people influence language. Language is socially constructed, and depends on the meanings people attach to it. Because language is not rigid and changes depending on the situation, the very usage of language is rhetorical. An author, White would say, is always trying to construct a new world and persuading his or her readers to share that world within the text.[18] People engage in rhetoric any time they speak or produce meaning. Even in the field of science, via practices which were once viewed as being merely the objective testing and reporting of knowledge, scientists persuade their audience to accept their findings by sufficiently demonstrating that their study or experiment was conducted reliably and resulted in sufficient evidence to support their conclusions.[19] The vast scope of rhetoric is difficult to define. Political discourse remains the paradigmatic example for studying and theorizing specific techniques and conceptions of persuasion or rhetoric.[20] Throughout European History, rhetoric meant persuasion in public and political settings such as assemblies and courts.[citation needed] Because of its associations with democratic institutions, rhetoric is commonly said to flourish in open and democratic societies with rights of free speech, free assembly, and political enfranchisement for some portion of the population.[citation needed] Those who classify rhetoric as a civic art believe that rhetoric has the power to shape communities, form the character of citizens, and greatly affect civic life. Rhetoric was viewed as a civic art by several of the ancient philosophers. Aristotle and Isocrates were two of the first to see rhetoric in this light. In Antidosis, Isocrates states, "We have come together and founded cities and made laws and invented arts; and, generally speaking, there is no institution devised by man which the power of speech has not helped us to establish."[21] With this statement he argues that rhetoric is a fundamental part of civic life in every society and that it has been necessary in the foundation of all aspects of society. He further argues in Against the Sophists that rhetoric, although it cannot be taught to just anyone, is capable of shaping the character of man. He writes, "I do think that the study of political discourse can help more than any other thing to stimulate and form such qualities of character."[22] Aristotle, writing several years after Isocrates, supported many of his arguments

other. James Zappen defines cultural rhetorics as the idea that rhetoric is concerned with negotiation and listening, not persuasion, which differs from ancient definitions.[44] Some ancient rhetoric was disparaged because its persuasive techniques could be used to teach falsehoods.[45] Communication as studied in cultural rhetorics is focused on listening and negotiation, and has little to do with persuasion.[44] Rhetorical education focused on five canons. The Five Canons of Rhetoric serve as a guide to creating persuasive messages and arguments: inventio (invention) the process that leads to the development and refinement of an argument. dispositio (disposition, or arrangement) used to determine how an argument should be organized for greatest effect, usually beginning with the exordium elocutio (style) determining how to present the arguments memoria (memory) the process of learning and memorizing the speech and persuasive messages pronuntiatio (presentation) and actio (delivery) the gestures, pronunciation, tone, and pace used when presenting the persuasive arguments—the Grand Style. Memory was added much later to the original four canons.[46] During the Renaissance rhetoric enjoyed a resurgence, and as a result nearly every author who wrote about music before the Romantic era discussed rhetoric.[47] Joachim Burmeister wrote in 1601, "there is only little difference between music and the nature of oration".[This quote needs a citation] Christoph Bernhard in the latter half of the century said "...until the art of music has attained such a height in our own day, that it may indeed be compared to a rhetoric, in view of the multitude of figures".[needs context][48] Epistemology and rhetoric have been compared to one another for decades, but the specifications of their similarities have gone undefined. Since scholar Robert L. Scott stated that, "rhetoric is epistemic,"[49] rhetoricians and philosophers alike have struggled to concretely define the expanse of implications these words hold. Those who have identified this inconsistency maintain the idea that Scott's relation is important, but requires further study.[50] The root of the issue lies in the ambiguous use of the term rhetoric itself, as well as the epistemological terms knowledge, certainty, and truth.[50] Though counterintuitive and vague, Scott's claims are accepted by some academics, but are then used to draw different conclusions. Sonja K. Foss, for example, takes on the view that, "rhetoric creates knowledge,"[51] whereas James Herrick writes that rhetoric assists in people's ability to form beliefs, which are defined as knowledge once they become widespread in a community.[52] It is unclear whether Scott holds that certainty is an inherent part of establishing knowledge, his references to the term abstract.[49][53] He is not the only one, as the debate's persistence in philosophical circles long predates his addition of rhetoric. There is an overwhelming majority that does support the concept of certainty as a requirement for knowledge, but it is at the definition of certainty where parties begin to diverge. One definition maintains that certainty is subjective and feeling-based, the other that it is a byproduct of justification. The more commonly accepted definition of rhetoric claims it is synonymous with persuasion. For rhetorical purposes, this definition, like many others, is too broad. The same issue presents itself with definitions that are too narrow. Rhetoricians in support of the epistemic view of rhetoric have yet to agree in this regard.[50] Philosophical teachings refer to knowledge as a justified true belief. However, the Gettier Problem explores the room for fallacy in this concept.[54] Therefore, the Gettier Problem impedes the effectivity of the argument of Richard A. Cherwitz and James A. Hikins,[55] who employ the justified true belief standpoint in their argument for rhetoric as epistemic. Celeste Condit Railsback takes a different approach,[56] drawing from Ray E. McKerrow's system of belief based on validity rather than certainty.[57] William D. Harpine refers to the issue of unclear definitions that occurs in the theories of "rhetoric is epistemic" in his 2004 article "What Do You Mean, Rhetoric Is Epistemic?".[50] In it, he focuses on uncovering the most appropriate definitions for the terms "rhetoric", "knowledge", and "certainty". According to Harpine, certainty is either objective or subjective. Although both Scotts[49] and Cherwitz and Hikins[55] theories deal with some form of certainty, Harpine believes that knowledge is not required to be neither objectively nor subjectively certain. In terms of "rhetoric", Harpine argues that the definition of rhetoric as "the art of persuasion" is the best choice in the context of this theoretical approach of rhetoric as epistemic. Harpine then proceeds to present two methods of approaching the idea of rhetoric as epistemic based on the definitions presented. One centers on Alston's[58] view that one's beliefs are justified if formed by one's normal doxastic while the other focuses on the causal theory of knowledge.[59] Both approaches manage to avoid Gettier's problems and do not rely on unclear conceptions of certainty. In the discussion of rhetoric and epistemology, comes the question of ethics. Is it ethical for rhetoric to present itself in the branch of knowledge? Scott rears this question, addressing the issue, not with ambiguity in the definitions of other terms, but against subjectivity regarding certainty. Ultimately, according to Thomas O. Sloane, rhetoric and epistemology exist as counterparts, working towards the same purpose of establishing knowledge, with the common enemy of subjective certainty.[60] Rhetoric is a persuasive speech that holds people to a common purpose and therefore facilitates collective action. During the fifth century BCE, Athens had become active in metropolis and people all over there. During this time the Greek city state had been experimenting with a new form of government—democracy, demos, "the people". Political and cultural identity had been tied to the city area—the citizens of Athens formed institutions to the red processes: are the Senate, jury trials, and forms of public discussions, but people needed to learn how to navigate these new institutions. With no forms of passing on the information, other than word of mouth the Athenians needed an effective strategy to inform the people. A group of wandering Sicilians, later known as the Sophists, began teaching the Athenians persuasive speech, with the goal of navigating the courts and senate. The sophists became speech teachers known as Sophia; Greek for "wisdom" and root for philosophy, or "love of wisdom"—the sophists came to be common term for someone who sold wisdom for money.[61] Although there is no clear understanding why the Sicilians engaged to educating the Athenians persuasive speech. It is known that the Athenians did, indeed rely on persuasive speech, more during public speak, and four new political processes, also increasing the sophists trainings leading too many victories for legal cases, public debate, and even a simple persuasive speech. This ultimately led to concerns rising on falsehood over truth, with highly trained, persuasive speakers, knowingly, misinforming.[61] Rhetoric has its origins in Mesopotamia.[62] Some of the earliest examples of rhetoric can be found in the Akkadian writings of the princess and priestess Enheduanna (c. 2285–2250 BCE).[63] As the first named author in history,[62][63] Enheduanna's writing exhibits numerous rhetorical features that would later become canon in Ancient Greece. Enheduanna's "The Exaltation of Inanna", includes an exordium, argument, and peroration,[62] as well as elements of ethos, pathos, and logos,[63] and repetition and metonymy.[64] She is also known for describing her process of invention in "The Exaltation of Inanna", moving between first- and third-person address to relate her composing process in collaboration with the goddess Inanna,[63] reflecting a mystical enthymeme[65] in drawing upon a Cosmic audience.[63] Later examples of early rhetoric can be found in the Neo-Assyrian Empire during the time of Sennacherib (704–681 BCE).[66] In ancient Egypt, rhetoric had existed since at least the Middle Kingdom period (c. 2080–1640 BCE). The five canons of eloquence in ancient Egyptian rhetoric were silence, timing, restraint, fluency, and truthfulness.[67] The Egyptians held eloquent speaking in high esteem. Egyptian rules of rhetoric specified that "knowing when not to speak is essential, and very respected, rhetorical knowledge", making rhetoric a "balance between eloquence and wise silence". They also emphasized "adherence to social behaviors that support a conservative status quo" and they held that "skilled speech should support, not question, society".[68] In ancient China, rhetoric dates back to the Chinese philosopher, Confucius (551–479 BCE). The tradition of Confucianism emphasized the use of eloquence in speaking.[69] The use of rhetoric can also be found in the ancient Biblical tradition.[70] In Europe, organized thought about public speaking began in ancient Greece.[71] In ancient Greece, the earliest mention of oratorical skill occurs in Homer's Iliad, in which heroes like Achilles, Hector, and Odysseus were honored for their ability to advise and exhort their peers and followers (the Laos or army) to wise and appropriate action. With the rise of the democratic polis, speaking skill was adapted to the needs of the public and political life of cities in ancient Greece. Greek citizens used oratory to make political and judicial decisions, and to develop and disseminate philosophical ideas. For modern students, it can be difficult to remember that the wide use and availability of written texts is a phenomenon that was just coming into vogue in Classical Greece. In Classical times, many of the great thinkers and political leaders performed their works before an audience, usually in the context of a competition or contest for fame, political influence, and cultural capital. In fact, many of them are known only through the texts that their students, followers, or detractors wrote down. Rhetor was the Greek term for "orator": A rhetor was a citizen who regularly addressed juries and political assemblies and who was thus understood to have gained some knowledge about public speaking in the process, though in general facility with language was often referred to as logôn techne, "skill with arguments" or "verbal artistry".[72][page needed] Possibly the first study about the power of language may be attributed to the philosopher Empedocles (d. c. 444 BCE), whose theories on human knowledge would provide a basis for many future rhetoricians. The first written manual is attributed to Corax and his pupil Tisias. Their work, as well as that of many of the early rhetoricians, grew out of the courts of law; Tisias, for example, is believed to have written judicial speeches that others delivered in the courts. Rhetoric evolved as an important art, one that provided the orator with the forms, means, and strategies for persuading an audience of the correctness of the orator's arguments. Today the term rhetoric can be used at times to refer only to the form of argumentation, often with the pejorative connotation that rhetoric is a means of obscuring the truth. Classical philosophers believed quite the contrary: the skilled use of rhetoric was essential to the discovery of truths, because it provided the means of ordering and clarifying arguments. Main article: Sophists Teaching in oratory was popularized in the 5th century BCE by itinerant teachers known as sophists, the best known of whom were Protagoras (c. 481–420 BCE), Gorgias (c. 483–376 BCE), and Isocrates (436–338 BCE). Aspasia of Miletus is believed to be one of the first women to engage in private and public rhetorical activities as a Sophist.[73] The Sophists were a disparate group who travelled from city to city, teaching in public places to attract students and offer them an education. Their central focus was on logos, or what we might broadly refer to as discourse, its functions and powers. [citation needed] They defined parts of speech, analyzed poetry, parsed close synonyms, invented argumentation strategies, and debated the nature of reality.[citation needed] They claimed to make their students better, or, in other words, to teach virtue. They thus claimed that human excellence was not an accident of fate or a prerogative of noble birth, but an art or "techne" that could be taught and learned. They were thus among the first humanists.[74] Several Sophists also questioned received wisdom about the gods and the Greek culture, which they believed was taken for granted by Greeks of their time, making these Sophists among the first agnostics. For example, some argued that cultural practices were a function of convention or nomos rather than blood or birth or phusis.[75] They argued further that the morality or immorality of any action could not be judged outside of the cultural context within which it occurred. The well-known phrase, "Man is the measure of all things" arises from this belief.[citation needed] One of the Sophists' most famous, and infamous, doctrines has to do with probability and counter arguments. They taught that every argument could be countered with an opposing argument, that an argument's effectiveness derived from how "likely" it appeared to the audience (its probability of seeming true), and that any probability argument could be countered with an inverted probability argument. Thus, if it seemed likely that a strong, poor man were guilty of robbing a rich, weak man, the strong poor man could argue, on the contrary, that this very likelihood (that he would be a suspect) makes it unlikely that he committed the crime, since he would most likely be apprehended for the crime. [citation needed] They also taught and were known for their ability to make the weaker (or worse) argument the stronger (or better).[citation needed] Aristophanes famously parodies the clever inversions that sophists were known for in his play The Clouds.[citation needed] The word "sophistry" developed negative connotations in ancient Greece that continue today, but in ancient Greece, Sophists were popular and well-paid professionals, respected for their abilities and also criticized for their excesses. According to William Keith and Christian Lundberg, as the Greek society shifted towards more democratic values, the Sophists were responsible for teaching the newly democratic Greek society the importance of persuasive speech and strategic communication for its new governmental institutions.[76] Main article: Isocrates Isocrates (436–338 BCE), like the Sophists, taught public speaking as a means of human improvement, but he worked to distinguish himself from the Sophists, whom he saw as claiming far more than they could deliver. He suggested that while an art of virtue or excellence did exist, it was only one piece, and the least, in a process of self-improvement that relied much more on honing one's talent, desire, constant practice, and the imitation of good models. Isocrates believed that practice in speaking publicly about noble themes and important questions would improve the character of both speaker and audience while also offering the best service to a city. Isocrates was an outspoken champion of rhetoric as a mode of civic engagement.[77] He thus wrote his speeches as "models" for his students to imitate in the same way that poets might imitate Homer or Hesiod, seeking to inspire in them a desire to attain fame through civic leadership. His was the first permanent school in Athens and it is likely that Plato's Academy and Aristotle's Lyceum were founded in part as a response to Isocrates. Though he left no handbooks, his speeches ("Antidosis" and "Against the Sophists" are most relevant to students of rhetoric) became models of oratory and keys to his entire educational program. He was one of the canonical "Ten Attic Orators". He influenced Cicero and Quintilian, and through them, the entire educational system of the west. Main articles: Plato and Platonism Plato (427–347 BCE) outlined the differences between true and false rhetoric in a number of dialogues—particularly the Gorgias and Phaedrus, dialogues in which Plato disputes the sophistic notion that the art of persuasion (the Sophists' art, which he calls "rhetoric"), can exist independent of the art of dialectic. Plato claims that since Sophists appeal only to what seems probable, they are not advancing their students and audiences, but simply flattering them with what they want to hear. While Plato's condemnation of rhetoric is clear in the Gorgias, in the Phaedrus he suggests the possibility of a true art wherein rhetoric is based upon the knowledge produced by dialectic. He relies on a dialectically informed rhetoric to appeal to the main character, Phaedrus, to take up philosophy. Thus Plato's rhetoric is actually dialectic (or philosophy) "turned" toward those who are not yet philosophers and are thus unready to pursue dialectic directly. Plato's animosity against rhetoric, and against the Sophists, derives not only from their inflated claims to teach virtue and their reliance on appearances, but from the fact that his teacher, Socrates, was sentenced to death after Sophists' efforts. Some scholars, however, see Plato not as an opponent of rhetoric but rather as a nuanced rhetorical theorist who dramatized rhetorical practice in his dialogues and imagined rhetoric as more than just oratory.[10] A marble bust of Aristotle Main article: Rhetoric (Aristotle)Aristotle: Rhetoric is an antistrophes to dialectic. "Let rhetoric [be defined as] an ability [dynamis], in each [particular] case, to see the available means of persuasion." "Rhetoric is a counterpart of dialectic" — an art of practical civic reasoning, applied to deliberative, judicial, and "display" speeches in political assemblies, lawcourts, and other public gatherings.This section needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources in this section. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. (September 2013) (Learn how and when to remove this message) Aristotle (384–322 BCE) was a student of Plato who set forth an extended treatise on rhetoric that still repays careful study today. In the first sentence of The Art of Rhetoric, Aristotle says that "rhetoric is the antistrophe of dialectic".[78]:I.1 As the "antistrophe" of a Greek ode responds to and is patterned after the structure of the "strophe" (they form two sections of the whole and are sung by two parts of the chorus), so the art of rhetoric follows and is structurally patterned after the art of dialectic because both are arts of discourse production. While dialectical methods are necessary to find truth in theoretical matters, rhetorical methods are required in practical matters such as adjudicating somebody's guilt or innocence when charged in a court of law, or adjudicating a prudent course of action to be taken in a deliberative assembly. For Plato and Aristotle, dialectic involves persuasion, so when Aristotle says that rhetoric is the antistrophe of dialectic, he means that rhetoric as he uses the term has a domain or scope of application that is parallel to, but different from, the domain or scope of application of dialectic. Claude Pavur explains that "[t]he Greek prefix 'anti' does not merely designate opposition, but it can also mean 'in place of'".[79] Aristotle's treatise on rhetoric systematically describes civic rhetoric as a human art or skill (techne). It is more of an objective theory[clarification needed] than it is an interpretive theory with a rhetorical tradition. Aristotle's art of rhetoric emphasizes persuasion as the purpose of rhetoric. His definition of rhetoric as "the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion", essentially a mode of discovery, limits the art to the inventional process; Aristotle emphasizes the logical aspect of this process. A speaker supports the probability of a message by logical, ethical, and emotional proofs. Aristotle identifies three steps or "offices" of rhetoric—invention, arrangement, and style—and three different types of rhetorical proof:[78]:I.2 ethos Aristotle's theory of character and how the character and credibility of a speaker can influence an audience to consider him/her to be believable—there being three qualities that contribute to a credible ethos: perceived intelligence, virtuous character, and goodwill pathos the use of emotional appeals to alter the audience's judgment through metaphor, amplification, storytelling, or presenting the topic in a way that evokes strong emotions in the audience logos the use of reasoning, either inductive or deductive, to construct an argument Aristotle emphasized enthymematic reasoning as central to the process of rhetorical invention, though later rhetorical theorists placed much less emphasis on it. An "enthymeme" follows the form of a syllogism, however it excludes either the major or minor premise. An enthymeme is persuasive because the audience provides the missing premise. Because the audience participates in providing the missing premise, they are more likely to be persuaded by the message. Aristotle identified three different types or genres of civic rhetoric:[78]:I.3 Forensic (also known as judicial) concerned with determining the truth or falseness of events that took place in the past and issues of guilt—for example, in a courtroom[78]:I.10–15 Deliberative (also known as political) concerned with determining whether or not particular actions should or should not be taken in the future—for example, making laws Epideictic (also known as ceremonial) concerned with praise and blame, values, right and wrong, demonstrating beauty and skill in the present—for example, a eulogy or a wedding toast Another Aristotelian doctrine was the idea of topics (also referred to as common topics or commonplaces). Though the term had a wide range of application (as a memory technique or compositional exercise, for example) it most often referred to the "seats of argument"—the list of categories of thought or modes of reasoning—that a speaker could use to generate arguments or proofs. The topics were thus a heuristic or inventional tool designed to help speakers categorize and thus better retain and apply frequently used types of argument. For example, since we often see effects as "like" their causes, one way to invent an argument (about a future effect) is by discussing the cause (which it will be "like"). This and other rhetorical topics derive from Aristotle's belief that there are certain predictable ways in which humans (particularly non-specialists) draw conclusions from premises. Based upon and adapted from his dialectical Topics, the rhetorical topics became a central feature of later rhetorical theorizing, most famously in Cicero's work of that name. Further information: Ancient Indian rhetoric India's Struggle for Independence offers a vivid description of the culture that sprang up around the newspaper in village India of the early 1870s: A newspaper would reach remote villages and would then be read by a reader to tens of others. Gradually library movements sprung up all over the country. A local 'library' would be organized around a single newspaper. A table, a bench or two or a charpoy would constitute the capital equipment. Every piece of news or editorial comment would be read or heard and thoroughly discussed. The newspaper not only became the political educator; reading or discussing it became a form of political participation.[80] This reading and discussion was the focal point of origin of the modern Indian rhetorical movement. Much before this, ancients such as Kautilya, Birbal, and the like indulged in a great deal of discussion and persuasion. Keith Lloyd argued that much of the recital of the Vedas can be likened to the recital of ancient Greek poetry.[81] Lloyd proposed including the Nyāya Sūtras in the field of rhetorical studies, exploring its methods within their historical context, comparing its approach to the traditional logical syllogism, and relating it to modern perspectives of Stephen Toulmin, Kenneth Burke, and Chaim Perelman. Nyaya is a Sanskrit word which means "just" or "right" and refers to "the science of right and wrong reasoning".[82]:356 Sutra is also a Sanskrit word which means string or thread. Here sutra refers to a collection of aphorism in the form of a manual. Each sutra is a short rule usually consisted of one or two sentences. An example of a sutra is: "Reality is truth, and what is true is so, irrespective of whether we know it is, or are aware of that truth." The Nyāya Sūtras is an ancient Indian Sanskrit text composed by Aksapada Gautama. It is the foundational text of the Nyaya school of Hindu philosophy. It is estimated that the text was composed between 6th-century BCE and 2nd-century CE. The text may have been composed by more than one author, over a period of time.[83] Radhakrishan and Moore placed its origin in the third century BCE "though some of the contents of the Nyaya Sutra are certainly a post-Christian era".[82]:36 The ancient school of Nyaya extended over a period of one thousand years, beginning with Gautama about 550 BCE and ending with Vatsyayana about 400 CE.[84] Nyaya provides insight into Indian rhetoric. Nyaya presents an argumentative approach with which a rhetor can decide about any argument. In addition, it proposes an approach to thinking about cultural tradition which is different from Western rhetoric. Whereas Toulmin emphasizes the situational dimension of argumentative genre as the fundamental component of any rhetorical logic; Nyaya views this situational rhetoric in a new way which offers context of practical arguments[vague]. Some of India's famous rhetors include Kabir Das, Rahim Das, Chanakya, and Chandragupt Maurya. Bust of Marcus Tullius Cicero Main articles: Cicero, Asiatic style, De Inventione, De Oratore, Brutus (Cicero), De Optimo Genere Oratorum, and De Partitionibus Oratoriae For the Romans, oration became an important part of public life. Cicero (106–43 BCE) was chief among Roman rhetoricians and remains the best known ancient orator and the only orator who both spoke in public and produced treatises on the subject. Rhetorica ad Herennium, formerly attributed to Cicero but now considered to be of unknown authorship, is one of the most significant works on rhetoric and is still widely used as a reference today. It is an extensive reference on the use of rhetoric, and in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, it achieved wide publication as an advanced school text on rhetoric. Cicero charted a middle path between the competing Attic and Asiatic styles to become considered second only to Demosthenes among history's orators.[85] His works include the early and very influential De Inventione (On Invention, often read alongside Ad Herennium as the two basic texts of rhetorical theory throughout the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance), De Oratore (a fuller statement of rhetorical principles in dialogue form), Topics (a rhetorical treatment of common topics, highly influential through the Renaissance), Brutus (a discussion of famous orators), and Orator (a defense of Cicero's style). Cicero also left a large body of speeches and letters which would establish the outlines of Latin eloquence and style for generations. The rediscovery of Cicero's speeches (such as the defense of Archias) and letters (to Atticus) by Italians like Petrarch helped to ignite the Renaissance.[86] Cicero championed the learning of Greek (and Greek rhetoric), contributed to Roman ethics, linguistics, philosophy, and politics, and emphasized the importance of all forms of appeal (emotion, humor, stylistic range, irony, and digression in addition to pure reasoning) in oratory. But perhaps his most significant contribution to subsequent rhetoric, and education in general, was his argument that orators learn not only about the specifics of their case (the hypothesis) but also about the general questions from which they derived (the theses).[citation needed] Thus, in giving a speech in defense of a poet whose Roman citizenship had been questioned, the orator should examine not only the specifics of that poet's civic status, he should also examine the role and value of poetry and of literature more generally in Roman culture and political life. The orator, said Cicero, needed to be knowledgeable about all areas of human life and culture, including law, politics, history, literature, ethics, warfare, medicine, and even arithmetic and geometry. Cicero gave rise to the idea that the "ideal orator" be well-versed in all branches of learning: an idea that was rendered as "liberal humanism", and that lives on today in liberal arts or general education requirements in colleges and universities around the world.[87] Main articles: Quintilian and Byzantine rhetoric This section does not cite any sources. Please help improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. (July 2010) (Learn how and when to remove this message) Quintilian (35–100 CE) began his career as a pleader in the courts of law; his reputation grew so great that Vespasian created a chair of rhetoric for him in Rome. The culmination of his life's work was the Institutio Oratoria (Institutes of Oratory, or alternatively, The Orator's Education), a lengthy treatise on the training of the orator, in which he discusses the training of the "perfect" orator from birth to old age and, in the process, reviews the doctrines and opinions of many influential rhetoricians who preceded him. In the Institutes, Quintilian organizes rhetorical study through the stages of education that an aspiring orator would undergo, beginning with the selection of a nurse. Aspects of elementary education (training in reading and writing, grammar, and literary criticism) are followed by preliminary rhetorical exercises in composition (the progymnasmata) that include maxims and fables, narratives and comparisons, and finally full legal or political speeches. The delivery of speeches within the context of education or for entertainment purposes became widespread and popular under the term "declamation". This work was available only in fragments in medieval times, but the discovery of a complete copy at the Abbey of St. Gall in 1416 led to its emergence as one of the most influential works on rhetoric during the Renaissance. Quintilian's work describes not just the art of rhetoric, but the formation of the perfect orator as a politically active, virtuous, publicly minded citizen. His emphasis was on the ethical application of rhetorical training, in part in reaction against the tendency in Roman schools toward standardization of themes and techniques. At the same time that rhetoric was becoming divorced from political decision making, rhetoric rose as a culturally vibrant and important mode of entertainment and cultural criticism in a movement known as the "Second Sophistic", a development that gave rise to the charge (made by Quintilian and others) that teachers were emphasizing style over substance in rhetoric. After the breakup of the western Roman Empire, the study of rhetoric continued to be central to the study of the verbal arts. However the study of the verbal arts went into decline for several centuries, followed eventually by a gradual rise in formal education, culminating in the rise of medieval universities. Rhetoric transmuted during this period into the arts of letter writing (ars dictaminis) and sermon writing (ars praedicandi). As part of the trivium, rhetoric was secondary to the study of logic, and its study was highly scholastic: students were given repetitive exercises in the creation of discourses on historical subjects (suasoriae) or on classic legal questions (controversiae). Although he is not commonly regarded as a rhetorician, St. Augustine (354–430) was trained in rhetoric and was at one time a professor of Latin rhetoric in Milan. After his conversion to Christianity, he became interested in using these "pagan" arts for spreading his religion. He explores this new use of rhetoric in De doctrina Christiana, which laid the foundation of what would become homiletics, the rhetoric of the sermon. Augustine asks why "the power of eloquence, which is so efficacious in pleading either for the erroneous cause or the right", should not be used for righteous purposes.[88] One early concern of the medieval Christian church was its attitude to classical rhetoric itself. Jerome (d. 420) complained, "What has Horace to do with the Psalms, Virgil with the Gospels, Cicero with the Apostles?"[89] Augustine is also remembered for arguing for the preservation of pagan works and fostering a church tradition that led to conservation of numerous pre-Christian rhetorical writings. Rhetoric would not regain its classical heights until the Renaissance, but new writings did advance rhetorical thought. Boethius (c. 480–524), in his brief Overview of the Structure of Rhetoric, continues Aristotle's taxonomy by placing rhetoric in subordination to philosophical argument or dialectic.[90] The introduction of Arab scholarship from European relations with the Muslim empire (in particular Al-Andalus) renewed interest in Aristotle and Classical thought in general, leading to what some historians call the 12th century Renaissance. A number of medieval grammars and studies of poetry and rhetoric appeared. Late medieval rhetorical writings include those of St. Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225–1274), Matthew of Vendôme (Ars Versificatoria, c. 1175), and Geoffrey of Vinsauf (Poetria Nova, 1200–1216). Pre-modern female rhetoricians, outside of Socrates' friend Aspasia, are rare; but medieval rhetoric produced by women either in religious orders, such as Julian of Norwich (d. 1415), or the very well-connected Christine de Pizan (c. 1364–c. 1430), did occur although it was not always recorded in writing. In his 1943 Cambridge University doctoral dissertation in English, Canadian Marshall McLuhan (1911–1980) surveys the verbal arts from approximately the time of Cicero down to the time of Thomas Nashe (1567–c. 1600).[91] His dissertation is still noteworthy for undertaking to study the history of the verbal arts together as the trivium, even though the developments that he surveys have been studied in greater detail since he undertook his study. As noted below, McLuhan became one of the most widely publicized communication theorists of the 20th century. Another interesting record of medieval rhetorical thought can be seen in the many animal debate poems popular in England and the continent during the Middle Ages, such as The Owl and the Nightingale (13th century) and Geoffrey Chaucer's Parliament of Fowls. Renaissance humanism defined itself broadly as disfavoring medieval scholastic logic and dialectic and as favoring instead the study of classical Latin style and grammar and philology and rhetoric.[92] Portrait of Erasmus of Rotterdam One influential figure in the rebirth of interest in classical rhetoric was Erasmus (c. 1466–1536). His 1512 work, De Duplici Copia Verborum et Rerum (also known as Copia: Foundations of the Abundant Style), was widely published (it went through more than 150 editions throughout Europe) and became one of the basic school texts on the subject. Its treatment of rhetoric is less comprehensive than the classic works of antiquity, but provides a traditional treatment of res-verba (matter and form). Its first book treats the subject of elocutio, showing the student how to use schemes and tropes; the second book covers inventio. Much of the emphasis is on abundance of variation (copia means "plenty" or "abundance", as in copious or cornucopia), so both books focus on ways to introduce the maximum amount of variety into discourse. For instance, in one section of the De Copia, Erasmus presents two hundred variations of the sentence "Always, as long as I live, I shall remember you" ("Semper, dum vivam, tui meminero.") Another of his works, the extremely popular The Praise of Folly, also had considerable influence on the teaching of rhetoric in the later 16th century. Its orations in favour of qualities such as madness spawned a type of exercise popular in Elizabethan grammar schools, later called adoxography, which required pupils to compose passages in praise of useless things. Juan Luis Vives (1492–1540) also helped shape the study of rhetoric in England. A Spaniard, he was appointed in 1523 to the Lectureship of Rhetoric at Oxford by Cardinal Wolsey, and was entrusted by Henry VIII to be one of the tutors of Mary. Vives fell into disfavor when Henry VIII divorced Catherine of Aragon and left England in 1528. His best-known work was a book on education, De Disciplinis, published in 1531, and his writings on rhetoric included Rhetoricae, sive De Ratione Dicendi, Libri Tres (1533), De Consultatione (1533), and a treatise on letter writing, De Conscribendis Epistolas (1536). It is likely that many well-known English writers were exposed to the works of Erasmus and Vives (as well as those of the Classical rhetoricians) in their schooling, which was conducted in Latin (not English), often included some study of Greek, and placed considerable emphasis on rhetoric.[93] The mid-16th century saw the rise of vernacular rhetorics—those written in English rather than in the Classical languages. Adoption of works in English was slow, however, due to the strong scholastic orientation toward Latin and Greek. Leonard Cox's The Art or Crafte of Rhetoryke (c. 1524–1530; second edition published in 1532) is the earliest text on rhetorics in English; it was, for the most part, a translation of the work of Philipp Melanchthon.[94] Thomas Wilson's The Arte of Rhetorique (1553) presents a traditional treatment of rhetoric, for instance, the standard five canons of rhetoric. Other notable works included Angel Day's The English Secretorie (1586, 1592), George Puttenham's The Arte of English Poesie (1589), and Richard Rainholde's Foundacion of Rhetorike (1563). During this same period, a movement began that would change the organization of the school curriculum in Protestant and especially Puritan circles and that led to rhetoric losing its central place. A French scholar, Petrus Ramus (1515–1572), dissatisfied with what he saw as the overly broad and redundant organization of the trivium, proposed a new curriculum. In his scheme of things, the five components of rhetoric no longer lived under the common heading of rhetoric. Instead, invention and disposition were determined to fall exclusively under the heading of dialectic, while style, delivery, and memory were all that remained for rhetoric.[95] Ramus was martyred during the French Wars of Religion. His teachings, seen as inimical to Catholicism, were short-lived in France but found a fertile ground in the Netherlands, Germany, and England.[96] One of Ramus' French followers, Audomarus Talaeus (Omer Talon) published his rhetoric, Institutiones Oratoriae, in 1544. This work emphasized style, and became so popular that it was mentioned in John Brinsley's (1612) Ludus literarius; or The Grammar Schoole as being the "most used in the best schooles". Many other Ramist rhetorics followed in the next half-century, and by the 17th century, their approach became the primary method of teaching rhetoric in Protestant and especially Puritan circles.[97] John Milton (1608–1674) wrote a textbook in logic or dialectic in Latin based on Ramus' work.[98] Ramism could not exert any influence on the established Catholic schools and universities, which remained loyal to Scholasticism, or on the new Catholic schools and universities founded by members of the Society of Jesus or the Oratorians, as can be seen in the Jesuit curriculum (in use up to the 19th century across the Christian world) known as the Ratio Studiorum.[99] If the influence of Cicero and Quintilian permeates the Ratio Studiorum, it is through the lenses of devotion and the militancy of the Counter-Reformation. The Ratio was indeed imbued with a sense of the divine, of the incarnate logos, that is of rhetoric as an eloquent and humane means to reach further devotion and further action in the Christian city, which was absent from Ramist formalism. The Ratio is, in rhetoric, the answer to Ignatius Loyola's practice, in devotion, of "spiritual exercises". This complex oratorical-prayer system is absent from Ramism. In New England and at Harvard College (founded 1636), Ramus and his followers dominated.[100][page needed] However, in England, several writers influenced the course of rhetoric during the 17th century, many of them carrying forward the dichotomy[specify] that had been set forth by Ramus and his followers during the preceding decades. This century also saw the development of a modern, vernacular style that looked to English, rather than to Greek, Latin, or French models. Francis Bacon (1561–1626), although not a rhetorician, contributed to the field in his writings. One of the concerns of the age was to find a suitable style for the discussion of scientific topics, which needed above all a clear exposition of facts and arguments, rather than an ornate style. Bacon in his The Advancement of Learning criticized those who are preoccupied with style rather than "the weight of matter, worth of subject, soundness of argument, life of invention, or depth of judgment".[101] On matters of style, he proposed that the style conform to the subject matter and to the audience, that simple words be employed whenever possible, and that the style should be agreeable.[102][page needed] Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) also wrote on rhetoric. Along with a shortened translation of Aristotle's Rhetoric, Hobbes also produced a number of other works on the subject. Sharply contrarian on many subjects, Hobbes, like Bacon, also promoted a simpler and more natural style that used figures of speech sparingly. Perhaps the most influential development in English style came out of the work of the Royal Society (founded in 1660), which in 1664 set up a committee to improve the English language. Among the committee's members were John Evelyn (1620–1706), Thomas Sprat (1635–1713), and John Dryden (1631–1700). Sprat regarded "fine speaking" as a disease, and thought that a proper style should "reject all amplifications, digressions, and swellings of style" and instead "return back to a primitive purity and shortness".[103] While the work of this committee never went beyond planning, John Dryden is often credited with creating and exemplifying a new and modern English style. His central tenet was that the style should be proper "to the occasion, the subject, and the persons".[104] As such, he advocated the use of English words whenever possible instead of foreign ones, as well as vernacular, rather than Latinate, syntax. His own prose (and his poetry) became exemplars of this new style. Arguably one of the most influential schools of rhetoric during the 18th century was Scottish Belletristic rhetoric, exemplified by such professors of rhetoric as Hugh Blair whose Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres saw international success in various editions and translations, and Lord Kames with his influential Elements of Criticism. Another notable figure in 18th century rhetoric was Maria Edgeworth, a novelist and children's author whose work often parodied the male-centric rhetorical strategies of her time. In her 1795 "An Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification," Edgeworth presents a satire of Enlightenment rhetoric's science-centrism and the Belletristic Movement.[105] She was called "the great Maria" by Sir Walter Scott, with whom she corresponded,[106] and by modern scholars is noted as "a transgressive and ironic reader" of the 18th century rhetorical norms.[107] At the turn of the 20th century, there was a revival of rhetorical study manifested in the establishment of departments of rhetoric and speech at academic institutions, as well as the formation of national and international professional organizations.[108] The early interest in rhetorical studies was a movement away from elocution as taught in English departments in the United States, and an attempt to refocus rhetorical studies from delivery-only to civic engagement and a "rich complexity" of the nature of rhetoric.[109] By the 1930s, advances in mass media technology led to a revival of the study of rhetoric, language, persuasion, and political rhetoric and its consequences. The linguistic turn in philosophy also contributed to this revival. The term rhetoric came to be applied to media forms other than verbal language, e.g. visual rhetoric, "temporal rhetorics",[110] and the "temporal turn"[111] in rhetorical theory and practice. The rise of advertising and of mass media such as photography, telegraphy, radio, and film brought rhetoric more prominently into people's lives. The discipline of rhetoric has been used to study how advertising persuades,[112] and to help understand the spread of fake news and conspiracy theories on social media.[113] Kenneth Burke Burke was a rhetorical theorist, philosopher, and poet. Many of his works are central to modern rhetorical theory: Counterstatement (1931), A Grammar of Motives (1945), A Rhetoric of Motives (1950), and Language as Symbolic Action (1966). Among his influential concepts are "identification", "consubstantiality", and the "dramatistic pentad". He described rhetoric as "the use of language as a symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols".[114] In relation to Aristotle's theory, Aristotle was more interested in constructing rhetoric, while Burke was interested in "debunking" it. The Groupe μ This interdisciplinary team contributed to the renovation of the elocutio in the context of poetics and modern linguistics, significantly with Rhétorique générale[115] and Rhétorique de la poésie (1977). Marshall McLuhan McLuhan was a media theorist whose theories and whose choice of objects of study are important to the study of rhetoric. McLuhan's book The Mechanical Bride[116] was a compilation of exhibits of ads and other materials from popular culture with short essays involving rhetorical analyses of the persuasive strategies in each item. McLuhan later shifted the focus of his rhetorical analysis and began to consider how communication media themselves affect us as persuasive devices. His famous dictum "the medium is the message" highlights the significance of the medium itself. This shift in focus led to his two most widely known books, The Gutenberg Galaxy[117] and Understanding Media.[118] These books represent an inward turn to attending to one's consciousness in contrast to the more outward orientation of other rhetoricians toward sociological considerations and symbolic interaction. No other scholar of the history and theory of rhetoric was as widely publicized in the 20th century as McLuhan. Chaïm Perelman Perelman was among the most important argumentation theorists of the 20th century. His chief work is the Traité de l'argumentation—la nouvelle rhétorique (1958), with Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, which was translated into English as The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation.[119] Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca move rhetoric from the periphery to the center of argumentation theory. Among their most influential concepts are "dissociation", "the universal audience", "quasi-logical argument", and "presence". I. A. Richards Richards was a literary critic and rhetorician. His The Philosophy of Rhetoric is an important text in modern rhetorical theory.[120] In this work, he defined rhetoric as "a study of misunderstandings and its remedies", and introduced the influential concepts tenor and vehicle to describe the components of a metaphor—the main idea and the concept to which it is compared.[120]:97 Stephen Toulmin Toulmin was a philosopher whose Uses of Argument is an important text in modern rhetorical theory and argumentation theory.[121] Richard M. Weaver Weaver was a rhetorical and cultural critic

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